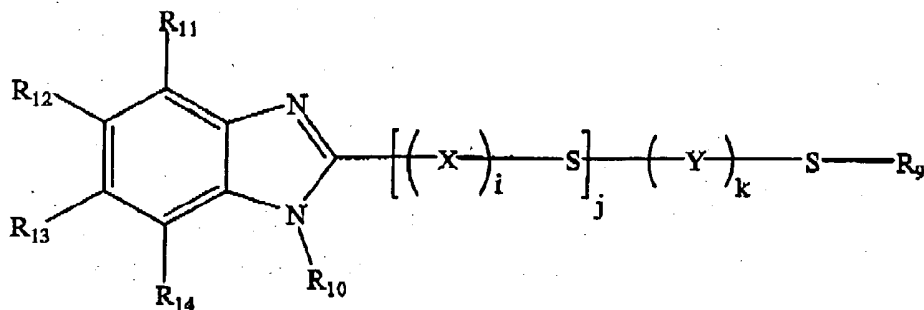


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54. (Currently Amended) A benzimidazole compound having following the structure (III),



(III)

wherein i is between about 0 and about 11;

wherein j is between about 1 and about 11;

wherein k is between about 1 and about 11;

wherein R<sub>9</sub> is a hydrogen atom or a sulfur-protecting functionality which is one member selected from the group consisting of an aliphatic functionality comprising at least about 4 carbon atom, an ester functionality comprising between about 1 and about 11 carbon atoms, a carbonate functionality comprising between about 1 and about 11 carbon atoms, and a benzylic functionality comprising at least about 7 carbon atoms which is attached to the terminal sulfur atom via the benzylic methylene carbon;

wherein R<sub>10</sub> is one member selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen, an aliphatic carbonyl functionality comprising about 1 to about 11 carbon atoms, an aliphatic functionality comprising between about 1 and about 11 carbon atoms, an aromatic carbonyl functionality comprising at least about 7 carbon atoms, and an aromatic functionality comprising at least about 6 carbon atoms; and

wherein each of R<sub>11</sub>, R<sub>12</sub>, R<sub>13</sub> and R<sub>14</sub> are independently one member selected from the

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group consisting of a hydrogen, a fluoride, a bromide, a chloride, an iodide, a vinyl group, a hydroxide, an alkoxide functionality comprising between about 1 and about 11 carbon atoms, an aryloxy functionality comprising at least about 6 carbon atoms, an aliphatic functionality comprising between about 1 and about 11 carbon atoms, an aromatic functionality comprising at least about 6 carbon atoms, a cycloaliphatic ring comprising at least about 5 carbon atoms, said cycloaliphatic ring being fused to the benzimidazole arene ring through an adjacent ring substituent, and a cycloaromatic ring comprising at least about 6 carbon atoms, said cycloaromatic ring being fused to the benzimidazole arene ring through an adjacent ring substituent;

wherein X is a linking functionality which is selected from the group consisting of a linear aliphatic chain comprising between about 1 and about 11 carbon atoms, a cyclic aliphatic ring comprising at least 5 carbon atoms, a cyclic aromatic ring comprising at least 6 carbon atoms, a cyclic aliphatic heterocycle comprising at least 3 carbon atoms, and a cyclic aromatic heterocycle comprising at least 3 carbon atoms; and

wherein Y is a linking functionality which is selected from the group consisting of a linear aliphatic chain comprising between about 1 and about 11 carbon atoms, a cyclic aliphatic ring comprising at least 5 carbon atoms, ~~a cyclic aromatic ring comprising at least 6 carbon atoms, a~~ cyclic aliphatic heterocycle comprising at least 3 carbon atoms, and a cyclic aromatic heterocycle comprising at least 3 carbon atoms.

Ex. A